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**PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD AFTER THE
BATTLE OF CULLODEN.**

A PRIZE POEM

RECITED IN THE THEATRE, OXFORD,

JUNE XVI. MDCCC XLVII.



**OXFORD :
FRANCIS MACPHERSON.**

MDCCC XLVII.

ANDERSON

The winds of night their dirge of battle bring
From the lost field of Scotland's exil'd king,
And worn and sad, his warriors far away,
The baffled Stuart mourns Culloden day*.
His Highland hearts are hush'd—the strife is o'er
That shook the shield, and wav'd the good claymore ;
Low now is laid Glengarry's trusty steel,
And quench'd the flashing brands of brave Lochiel ;
Murray—Macdonald—Keppoch—coldly gone,
And mute the warrior cry of Cameron.

Dark was the night, and thick with gloom the day
Where sad and lorn the weary chieftain lay ;
Friends—kinsfolk—warriors fled, and lonely there
The hope that linger'd yet was half despair.
Scant was the boon he crav'd,—that deep repose
For one short hour might win him from his woes :
But slumber would not soothe his rocky bed,
Nor o'er that burning brow her solace shed ;
Wakeful he lay, and heard the fretting gale
Loud moaning o'er the braes of Corrodale ;
Now hailing mid the storm's unearthly roar
The sorrow of his awful sires of yore ;

* “ The die was risk'd and foully cast
Upon *Culloden day*.”

Jacobite Reliques, vol. ii. song lxxiv.

Now yearning to defy the foe again,
And wield the sword of vengeance for his slain ;
Dreaming that Heaven his shield and strength would be
To weave once more the wreath of victory^b.
But cease thy dreams, lone Prince, on yonder height
Behold ! unwonted fires are gleaming bright !
And hark ! there echoes round yon ruddy glow
The martial music of th' unsparing foe^c.
O'er mount and wave they urge their noble prey
As bursts the hound upon the stag at bay,
On through the wild they come with kindling eye—
And shall to-morrow see the victim die ?
Ah no ! a star is on the brow of night,
From the dark cloud there leaps a living light,
Hope shall again the wanderer's woes beguile,
And pity lives at last in woman's smile.

^b Throughout his wanderings, Charles' confidence in the protection of Providence was remarkable. In speaking of the hardships which he had undergone to one of his companions he said, " Since the battle of Culloden, I have endured more than would kill a hundred men ; sure Providence does not design this for nothing. I am certainly yet reserved for some good."—See Chambers' History of the Rebellion, p. 106.

^c Lord Mahon says there were at this time on the Long Island militia and regular troops, to the number of 2,000 men, engaged in eager search for the Prince, while the shores were surrounded by small vessels of war, and that concealment or escape must have proved alike impossible but for Flora Macdonald.

High-minded Flora^d, deathless fame be thine
Fair daughter of Macdonald's storied line,
Strong was thy soul—the truth of man above,—
And thy heart beat with more than woman's love.
Thee from the hunted exile's lonely side
Woe could not sever, nor could death divide.
Long as his memory lives thy deeds shall claim
The glory of a high and noble name,
And wreath the rugged brow of war with smiles,
Thou hero-maiden of the western isles!
Lo! o'er the deep they glide—that island maid,
And the lorn prince in homely garb array'd:—
Frail is their bark, yet seaward o'er the waves
That seek Benbecula's resounding caves,
They swiftly bound, till, bright with sunset's smile,
Behind them gleams the brow of Rona's isle.
Yet seaward still the steadfast boatmen sweep,
For well they know who bids them brave the deep;—
That vesture cannot veil^e, those weeds efface
His kingly bearing, his majestic grace.

^d “We were entertained with the usual hospitality by Mr. Macdonald and his lady Flora Macdonald, a name that will be mentioned in history, and, if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour. She is a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence.”—Johnson's *Journey to the Hebrides*, p. 63.

^e “Bishop Forbes informs us, that he more than once heard Macleod speak of the utter uselessness of the Prince attempting to dissemble the indefinable air which distinguished him.

Now isle and headland fade, and shadowy night
Frowns on the woful wanderer's dreary flight;
Home to their beetling crag the seabirds fly,
And raise with tuneless shriek their boding cry;
While the swart raven sails with pinion slow,
And hoarsely breathes a prophet voice of woe;
And the deep thunder of the raging seas
Is echoing round the rocky Hebrides,
As though Iona's genii, rous'd from sleep,
Had call'd the hosts of air to war along the deep.
Yet hark! the chieftain chants in accents bold^f
Some thrilling legend of the days of old,
And breathes the strain those billowy paths along
As though he sooth'd the waves of night with song.

^f "There is not a person," he said, "who knows what the air of a noble or great man is, but, upon seeing the Prince in any disguise he could put on, would see something about him that was not ordinary—something of the stately and the grand."—Jesse, *Memoirs of the Pretenders*, vol. ii. p. 68.

^f "Exposed in such a vessel in the cold night air, at the mercy of a raging sea, and at the same time haunted by the fear of man's more deadly hostility, the sensations of the little party cannot be supposed to have been very agreeable. Charles could not help perceiving the uneasiness of his attendants, and anxious to compensate, by all the means in his power, for the pain which he had occasioned to them, he endeavoured to sustain their spirits by singing and talking. He sang the lively old song entitled 'The Restoration,' and told a few playful stories, which yielded them some amusement."—Chambers, p. 99.

See now! they fondly seek the welcome shore,
 And deem their refuge won, their peril o'er.
 But lo! the flash! the sound! and o'er them fly
 The hissing balls—the foe, the foe is nigh!
 There on the shore in grim array they throng,
 And cave and rock the volleying peal prolong.
 He fled—but not from woe—full many a day
 Beheld him o'er the island deserts stray
 All desolate and lone, while midnight shed
 Her pitying tears o'er his unshelter'd head.
 Famish'd and weary on the shores of Skye
 The peasants mark'd his woe with softening eye;
 Lone Raasay's shepherds saw him rest awhile
 In the deep valleys of their rugged isle;
 And round his couch of heather when he slept
 With faithful care unwearied watches kept.
 But thither rush'd the foe, and Moidart's shore
 Beckon'd from far the wanderer's feet once more;
 Again he sought Loch Shiel's forsaken strand,
 Where erst exulting march'd his eager band;

* "Approaching the coast of Skye, they were received by a volley of musketry from the soldiers stationed there, but none of the balls took effect, and the rowers, vigorously plying their oars, bore them away from that scene of danger, and enabled them to disembark on another point."—Mahon, vol. iii. p. 500.

Again he trod the heath of Finnan's vale,
Where first his banner caught the mountain gale^h ;—
But mute the echoes which had hail'd him there,
And sad the silence of that desert lair.
The seabird saw him on her crag intrude,
The eagle on his stormy solitude,
The homeless clansman, driven by the foe
To lofty ranges of the mountain roe,
In wild amazement met the exile there
Wasted and pale with want, and worn with care.
Where'er he gaz'd, the Victor's waving brand
Shed war and desolation o'er the land ;
Where'er he turn'd, the gathering foe was near,
And pass and valley dark with plume and spear.

Now in Glenmorriston behold him stand
Beneath the shieling of a robber-band !
The daring seven, of aspect stern and rude,
Who boldly held that haughty solitude.
No aliens they—on dark Culloden's plain
For him their mighty claymores heap'd the slain.
No dastard souls—they vow'd in kindled ire,
When o'er their dwellings rose th' avenging fire,
To front again the whelming tide of woe,
And brave with sheathless steel th' insulting foe.

^h A monument bearing a Latin inscription still points out the memorable spot.

Cheer'd by the faith of true and steadfast men!¹
The Stuart lingers in that desert glen,
And like the Bruce of old in Rachie's isle
'Mid darkest peril finds repose awhile.

'Tis midnight, and around the lawless band,
A watchful host, the shadowy mountains stand;
While high in heaven is glimmering fair and bright,
The starry diadem of solemn night.
On far Ben Nevis sleeps the moonlight gleam,
O'er still Loch Ness the stars in beauty beam,
And mid yon cavern glides that radiance pale,
Where slumbering lie the champions of the vale.
But lo! the Chief on bended² knee is there—
Apart he breathes the thrilling voice of prayer!—
Thou murmur'ing breeze, be silent! hush thy moan,
Thou rushing stream, beneath that hallow'd tone!—
And ye to whom yon radiant realms are given,
Bright angel-warders, waft the vow to Heaven!

Anon the cave is tenantless, and now
The wanderer rests on stern Benalder's brow,

¹ See an account of these famous robbers, generally called The Seven Men of Glenmorriston, in Chambers, p. 116.

² "He was observed to make a practice of withdrawing himself every morning and evening to perform his devotions."—Ibid., p. 117.

Where mantling heath and rifted rock conceal
 The faithful Cluny and the brave Lochiel¹.
 There in that mountain-home of storm and blast
 Hope sheds her rainbow o'er his doom at last,
 And soon he hails in Moidart's sheltering bay
 The bark that waits to bear him far away.

Oh! dark the gloom that o'er his spirit fell
 When to the mountain-land he bade farewell,
 And saw the valley fade, the cliff grow dim
 From whence the Monarch-Bird had welcom'd him^m.
 There once had gleam'd his glory's meteor ray—
 There trod the stately Sevenⁿ—but where were they?
 Thence with the brave he sought the path of Fame—
 And there return'd—but crush'd and lone he came.
 Was it a dream? alas! beside him rose
 The chieftain's sigh, the clansman's murmur'd woes;

¹ "They resided in a singular retreat, called the Cage, on the side of Mount Benalder; it was concealed by a close thicket, and half suspended in the air."—Lord Mahon's History of England, vol. iii. p. 504.

^m "As they neared the shore, an eagle that came hovering round the ship, delighted the adventurers by its favourable augury. 'Here,' said Lord Tullibardine, turning to his master, 'is the king of birds come to welcome your Royal Highness to Scotland.'"—Mahon, vol. iii. p. 342.

ⁿ "These were afterwards designated as the 'Seven Men of Moidart,' and the subsequent fate of each has been explored by the Jacobites with mournful curiosity."—Ibid., vol. iii. p. 346.

For there were bursting hearts, the shatter'd wreck
Of Fate and Fortune, on that woful deck !

Oh ! had he found the hero's glorious grave,
And perish'd on Culloden with the brave,
Nations had breath'd his dirge, and deathless Fame
Hallow'd for aye the latest Stuart's name.
Though bright his Morn with manhood's joyous pride,
How thick the darkness fell at Eveningtide° !
Monarchs forsook who foster'd him of old,
And faithless Gallia's ancient love grew cold.
Then, stung by treachery and sear'd with care,
He bow'd his soaring spirit to despair ;
Sought in excess and passion Lethe's gloom,
And steel'd the hearts that soften'd o'er his doom.
Yet oft the buried hope of youth would burn,
The ancient zeal, the former soul return,
Still were his country's faithful warriors dear,
Still would he shed for her the patriot's tear ;—

° " His character had darkened with his fortunes. A long train of disappointments and humiliations working on a fiery mind, spurred it almost into frenzy and degraded it. The habit of drinking, which for some years he indulged without restraint, seems to have been first formed during his Highland adventures and escapes ; when a dram of whiskey might sometimes supply the want of food and rest."—Mahon, vol. iii. p. 554.

E'en when old age with pain and sorrow came
The pibroch's note could wake the slumbering flame.
Scion of warrior sires, his flashing eye
Shone with the pride of old, and yearn'd for Victory.

Land of the loyal, when the Stuart fell,
Thy faithful Mountains sigh'd a fond farewell,
The dirge of Freedom peal'd along the gale,
And tears of Sorrow flow'd in every vale ;
Yet did that Conflict quell despotic sway,
It was the storm that roll'd thy thrall away,
The Cloud of Mercy hovering o'er thy tears,
A Fiery Pillar in thy path of years.
Still do thy children love Prince Charlie's name,
Like flowers along thy valleys lives his fame ;
Still many a bard in thrilling numbers sings
The hero-offspring of a hundred kings ;
Thy shepherds love to linger where he stood,
Of Gladsmuir sing, and ancient Holyrood ;
Tell how he fought that unavailing day,
And sigh once more Culloden's woes away.

P " It is also an affecting, and, I may surely add, redeeming circumstance in the life of this ill-fated prince, that amongst the amusements of his last and lonely hours, was that of playing on the Highland bagpipe those airs which in his brighter days soothed him in the bivouack, or led him to victory."—Chambers, p. 143.

But memory kindling wakes a happier theme,
They see their homes in conscious gladness beam;
The hills that echo with the hunter's horn,
The valleys where they bind the golden corn,
The peaceful throne where queenly beauty smiles,
And vassal-nations greet the Lady of the Isles.

'Mid alien graves he sleeps! the stately dome
Of Tiber's ancient city shrouds his tomb!
Peace to his ashes! tho' they coldly lie
Where heroes sleep, and wrecks of grandeur sigh,
No relique hallows more that solemn shrine
Than the last urn of Stuart's haughty line.
Well might he roam, with slow and pausing tread,
The Pilgrim Bard^a, the Minstrel of the dead,
To hail amid the tombs that kindling name
Theme of his youth, and hero of his fame!
Lo! as he leans upon his staff, return
The former dreams—the ancient glances burn!
Bright Holyrood is there—the pibroch rings—
And stately Flora moves a mate for Kings!
There smiles the Prince mid deeds of war and pride,
For Waverley hath won his blushing bride!

^a "Soon after his arrival I took Sir Walter to St. Peter's, which he had resolved to visit, that he might see the tomb of the last of the Stuarts."—See Scott's *Life by Lockhart*, vol. vii. p. 363.

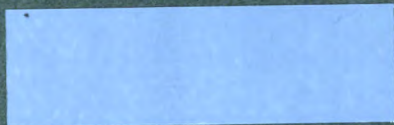
See ! yet again the scene of battle shines,
And proud Mac Ivor leads the serried lines !
Now stern Red-gauntlet waves the burning brand,
Lord of the dinted brow, and ruthless hand !
Ah ! who shall tell how yearn'd the minstrel's mind
To breathe again these visions to the wind ;
To chant once more the legend of his lay,
And chide with spells of song his grief away !
In vain ! e'en then the gloom of night was nigh,
The shadows brooded o'er the poet's eye—
Yet, liegeman true, he stood beside yon bier,
The scenes he lov'd in youth, in age were dear,
His latest sigh to Scotland's fame he gave,
And his last dream was on her Stuart's grave !
Quench'd was the soul of song—Health—Hope
 had fled !
The Bard was dying whilst he wept the dead.

JOHN ADAMS,

MAGDALEN HALL.

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